

YEARLY GUIDE  
TO THE  
EVERWAR™

EDITION 1044 PA



ALSO

*An Informal Guide to Aveum  
Its Peoples, Lands, and Enchantments*







*Dedication*

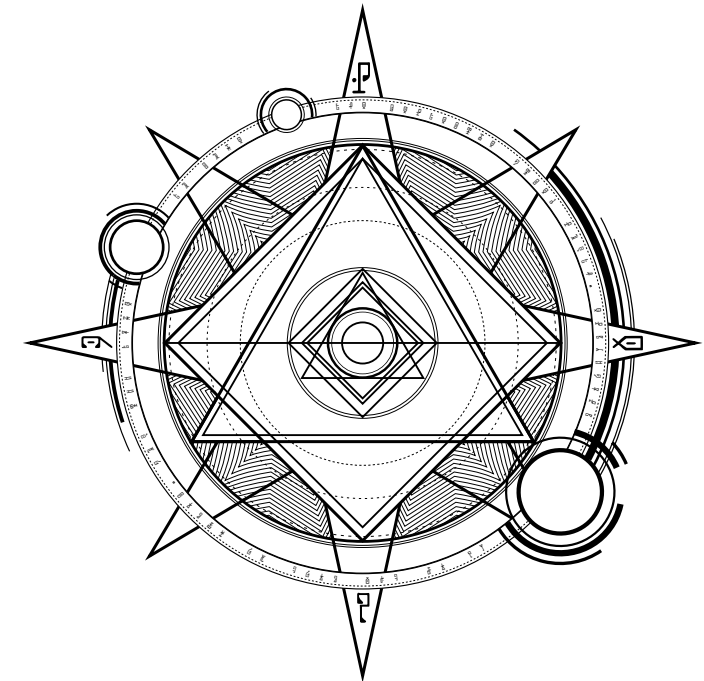
*Pentacade, your aion and eye, in both look more kindly on ours,*

*and make not the remainder be food for the Wound.*

THASSAL UNIVERSITY PRESS

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TO THE  
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FIRST PRINTING



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# INTRODUCTION

Five years ago, Grand Magnus Sandrakk of Chancellor House Thairiven, Lord Marshall of Rasharn, conquered Kalthus in what's largely regarded as an unjust aggression of the present Everwar. Against such accusations, the southern kindgom's howler-head pennants across the Kardava line whip with righteousness and scorn. In Rasharn's mind, they serve as mile markers that reach all the way back to the Battle of Bittercaul, a border skirmish eight hundred years ago that Sandrakk points to as the original grievance that necessitated his attack (!).

The scry-feeds are still alive with those horrors in the snow. In the aftermath of the Kalthus invasion, Sandrakk put the High Magni of the Order of the Oathsworn to the brand. Next, he annexed the coasts of the Deptari Unaffiliates, driving its wind-tribes into the ocean and conscripting fresh blood into his ever-increasing orphan battalions.

To the east, K'Ley has given up any hope of winning back even a modicum of its sovereignty. A fourth generation of Kleylish children has now grown to draft age under the inconstant Constant Occupation. As the Front shifts ever southward and back again, the Sea-Clans recognize the authority of whichever warmaster of Lucium or Rasharn is winning on any given day.

And in the west, the Gatterond may have removed Oremen as any true Kingdom by Fountain reckoning. Its remains are only blasted glass plains, beheaded mountains, and an airborne hinterlands above whose borders and holdings are still not fully accounted. The whispers that the calamity that ruined Oremen was not borne from Magister Akoth's social experiments but rather by sabotage by foreign bad actors are gaining volume.

Only Lucium is left to challenge Sandrakk, and it is still the prevailing opinion of our authors that they will ultimately fail to withstand him.





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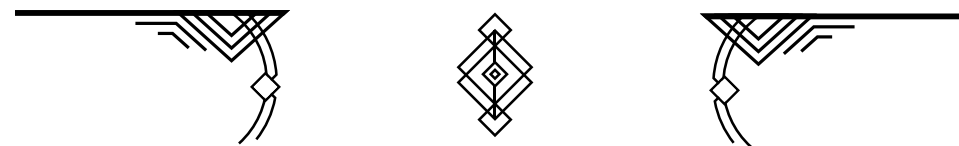
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# THE PENTACADE



The Five-Faced King of Magic. The Sovereign-in-Stone. Rising up from the center of the Wound to tower over us all in silent judgment. Pretty much nothing ever changes about our favorite Eternal Witness, so there's reason to be excited this year.

The Daloci Covenites report that the Northern Visage has narrowed its eyes ever so slightly towards the Harrowclimb. If one interprets this in Old Ionician fashion, then it bodes well for the dynastic houses in the region. Their hinters will be prosperous indeed. We should remind the reader that the same expression was observed on the Western Visage in the autumn of 1038 PA, a sign that Kalthus was to be favored in war that year. Their armies surrendered to Sandrakk by season's end.

Potentially much more important: the Hellica Independent claims to have recorded a very minute rotation west of the Pentacade as a whole, though they are unavailable to provide scrystone evidence to support it. (The reputation of that inestimable publication would be foolish to ignore, however.) Even in lieu of corroborating divinations, it is still the advice of our editors here at Thassal University Press that the International Gauge, Compass, & Astrolabe Commission amend the measurement of all Pentac coordinates by three millimantic units east, beginning in the spring.

Finally, seers across Aveum have remarked on a surge of dream-sightings of the Pentacade in its supposed Living Aspect, but we find that highly unlikely.





# THE WOUND



The Hole at the Heart of the World. The Nethersaint's Abyss. While Nocea isn't set to convene until summer 1045 PA, a joint committee of its augury-intelligence division did send out a warning to news outlets regarding the Wound's annual growth— the terminus has risen by a dozen (statute) lataciils or more.

For the lay reader, an explanation of the terminus is in order.

As we know, the depth of the Wound is a magical impossibility in that is literally bottomless. It does not open up on the other side of the world. There isn't a giant, endless pile of wreckage somewhere down there either. Instead, things that fall too far down into the Wound simply cease to exist.

At a depth of 1688 lataciils, objects disintegrate in a small explosion of pale fire. This dissolution plane— or terminus— is a constant, whether in the Wound proper or any of its branching rifts. Nautilopotrex ("deep birds") that dive too far into the Wound are common victims of disintegration.

If an object or concept is partially submerged past the terminus plane, that portion of it will burn away. Afterwards, no amount of restoration or healing magic can ever make the affected object whole again. The Wound's erasures, however small, are permanent. No material or mental construct, no matter how magically fortified, has ever survived passing through the terminus.

Until experts at Nocea have established a reason for the rise of this aspect of the Wound, non-military airship travel across it is not advised.





# MAGIC



Yltheum Fields will decide the Everwar.

We've heard that all year, from the headlines at the corner newsstands to the scrystone interviews of independent strategists. Hell, you probably heard the town criers intoning it while you were out buying lettuce from the market. But why? What is it about winning that particular battlefield and that particular Leyline Tower that finally declares Lucium or Rasharn the victor of the ultimate battle of our time?

Well, in Rasharn's case, the answer is easy. Yltheum Tower sits below one of the largest leyline nexuses in the world. It's also one of the few Aristeyan structures that's uncommonly intact, the machinery of its leyline-focusing lenses capable of Aion-level magic. The ability to blend the various colors of the Ionicus is already a rarified power—when amplified, it's so potent that it can reshape reality at a localized level.

Red magic that enhanced can disintegrate a person's bloodline backwards in time. Blue could apply an inescapable gravitational pull to emotions. Imagine the fear and anger of a whole battalion of soldiers plunging them through the ground like a newly-tunneled micro-Wound. A green magic given such dominion over life and death... well, that's when Yltheum simply reimagines existence itself. Of course, none of the above could be achieved without a Magnus daring enough to give it a try. We're pretty sure Sandrakk fits the bill.

So what's the win for Lucium in this case? They simply hold Rasharn back long enough that the law of attrition takes care of the rest. Sandrakk's forces aren't limitless, nor is the patience of the dynastic houses he ultimately answers to back home. Yet the Lord Marshall has committed so much of his war machine into capturing this one Leyline Tower that he can't stop now. So, yes, it's true—Yltheum Fields will decide the Everwar.



## BLUE MAGIC

Blue magic is the binding of physical forces, by far the easiest of the magics to comprehend. As such, practitioners of it are quick to make rank and deploy. The increasing conflict has perhaps taken too much advantage of that. This year has seen an expansion in mass-produced sigils, with metals of such inferior attunement that some models remain unfurled at all times. Craftsmagni reportedly disdain the practice, calling it an artless insult to magic. A guild strike is no doubt pending.

## RED MAGIC

Red magic is volatile, its battlemages often becoming casualties to their own incendiary power. An energetic domain seeking constant change, its arcano-engineers are invariably rushed to find suitable outlets. It's been another bumper crop year: combustion-powered clockworks are closer to a reality, flame-atlatls have found their way into the hands of lightless soldiers, and no fewer than seven new sigil models have been pulled from the discipline of inclement fire.

## GREEN MAGIC

Historically, green magic has been the most difficult to bind, cajole, or convince into the shape of rote spells and reliable weaponry. The domain of spirits and the final dark rails against fixed use. Ask any operator of a seekerstorm emplacement how ornery their equipment can become. Ironically, green sigils have seen little change over the centuries simply because the magic still enjoys their shapes. Officials continue to forego innovations in green magic to keep it happy.





LASH



LIMPET VIALS



BRACERS



LEGENDARY RINGS



# LANGUAGES



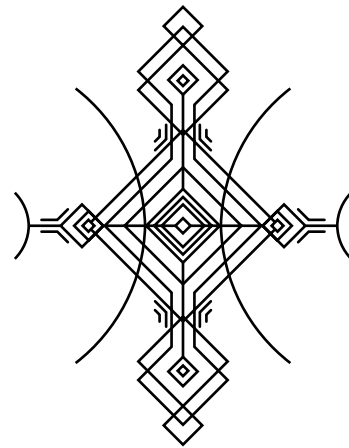
Most of the known kingdoms share a common root language derived from the trade tablets of the earliest Arjimahn tribes. Variations of it spread as the Wound grew and migrations followed. Then the Aristeya came, instituting their ubiquilects, universal systems that would be used for communication by everyone on Aveum. All extant languages were literally overwritten by replacement rituals—in mind, book, speech, and number.

When the Empire fell, magical feedback erased nearly every memory of it. As the structures and understanding of the ubiquilects fled their minds entirely, cultures furiously tried to unearth relics of older languages, hoping that something had survived. Speech and writing became unpredictable, as ethereal aftershocks of the Aristeyan collapse continued to disrupt them. This time period was later called the Lallation, and it was nearly impossible for anyone to convey to another any lasting sense of meaning. Wars followed, easy as they were to understand.

Humanity looked to the Magni to guide them out of this darkness. The principle gestures of magic had not changed, nor its expressions in color. The Magni were able to build a form of communication that could be read in the leylines, holding society together as it learned how to speak again. Perhaps it was at that point, more than any other, that those without magic became subservient to those that could wield it.



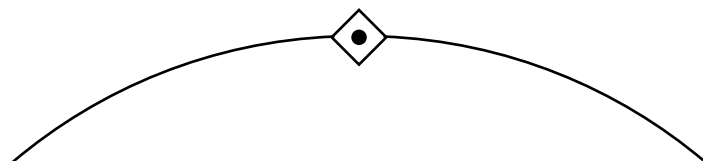




# LUCIAN



Telkha 402 is the state sponsored font of the Lucian language. Its use is mandatory on all official military and royal communiques and by most civilian printing press houses. Like many Aveum alphabets, it was constructed by Magni whose goal was to safeguard language through the shape and rendition of its letters from another Lallation— in essence, to magically trap meaning from being able to escape the written word. Being Lucian, the font is firm and plain, with no brandish of whimsey. Telkha 340 was its predecessor, whose characters showed a bit more vigor, but was eventually prohibited when an increasingly deviant message bleed was detected within its vowel shapes.



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## RASHARNIAN



The most common font in Rasharn is Velvo-in-Lime, but the shade of color in its name is only ever used by its dynastic houses. It's far livelier in its shapes than Lucium's Telkha 402— which describes most of Rasharnian aesthetic comparisons to other kingdoms-- but apparently no less vigilant when it comes to language disease. Magni of the Order of Masks have maintained the font's health and fidelity for centuries, with regular updates to its more elaborate contours, a known target of semiotic assault from ill-favored spirits and their kin.





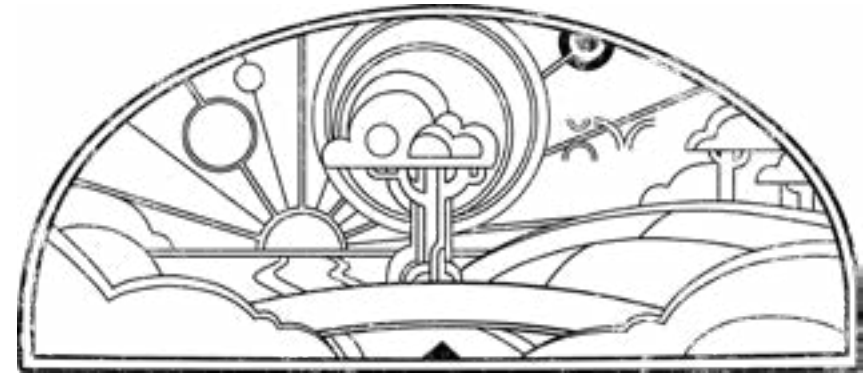
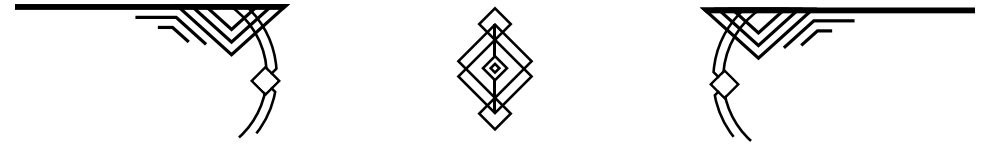


# ARISTEYAN

The script of the Aristeya was once the universal alphabet of all Aveum's cultures, a *ubiquilect* devised by its arcano-engineers before the Empire's collapse. Due to the Lallation, the protean shapes of its letters are now indecipherable by most human eyes, who never see the same alphabet twice when looking on it. (Flip ahead a few pages and back again to see for yourself.) Aristeyan writing is everywhere on the surfaces of their ruins, unknowable in its purpose or meaning. Study of this writing is known to cause mortal mental distress if attempted for too long. Near-sentient magical ciphers developed over the years have all met with violent dissolution when applied to any element of Aristeyan language. Save for a few daring crypto-linguists, the practice has largely been abandoned.



# ARISTEYA



It's one of Aveum's greatest mysteries: Aristeya, the world-spanning empire that no one can really remember. Three facts are for certain. Its roots are found in the preexisting tribes of the Arjimahn. During its height, its magical mastery knew no limits, having no rival before or since. And when it fell, the resulting reality quakes wiped out nearly all memory of it.

Aristeyan ruins are everywhere in Aveum, reaching to every quarter of our maps. There are some regional variations to be found in its architecture— minarets spun from spiderglass on the farthest Oremic sky-islands, marble scaled fountains in the Pavine Straits— but the most commonly used stonework is made from some exotic sublunar material found nowhere else. And then there are the statues of the Aristeyan Magni themselves— all of them giant, some with slightly inhuman features and others whose faces, for a span, mirror those of the observer's.

It is all of it a haunted majesty, our shared Aristeya. And if there is a cautionary tale to be learned from its fall, then by its last corrupted magics we have been made to forget it.











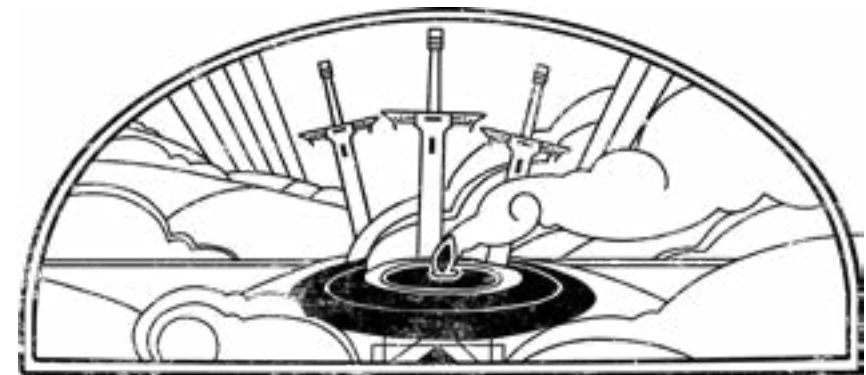
# LEYLINE TOWERS

The Leyline Towers were constructed by the Aristeya at the height of their power, sometimes on foundations built by even older cultures. Placed at nexus points below the leylines, Magni in control of these Towers can siphon and/or redirect magic on an incredible scale.

Aristeyan mastery of Tower Magic allowed for the reshaping of reality within the portion of the magical web they could influence, changing the course of rivers, growing stone from the air, removing death, disease, and the limitations of standard geometries. Today's more practical magni, however, use Tower Magic for largely industrial purposes and war materiel— mass-produced mana crystals, power cores, farcall stones, battle constructs, &c.



# KALTHUS



Let's be clear: this guide is at a bit of a loss when describing a Kalthus so violently in flux. Unlike K'Ley, whose history and peoples have been intertwined with occupation by foreign powers seemingly forever, the Kalth have never suffered invaders for long, and never so bloodily as they do now. It feels wrong to render a picture of that snowy kingdom as it was, as if its former glory is unlikely to return.

It is our sincerest hope that when this guide is next revised, we will once again be able to recommend Kalthus as a destination, full of ancient wonder and vibrant strength. But with its dynastic families scattered, its Magni Order in ruins, and skirmishes between rebels and Rasharnian war parties breaking out frequently and without warning, we can only discourage travelers from straying too close to the Kalthusian border.













# GLAIVEGATE

When Rasharn broke the walls of Glaivegate in 1038 PA, Kalthus formally surrendered to Sandrakk's forces. It was more a symbolic victory for Rasharn than a strategic one— the ancestral fortress of the ruling Kalth family, proud House Kaduss, had finally submitted. (Most contemporary experts point to the Oathbroken betrayals at the Djafi Crossings as the true endpoint of the war for Kalthus.) Indeed, when rebels recaptured Glaivegate scarcely a year later, consolidating their tribes under its banners, Sandrakk refused to counter again. Better that his enemies in Kalthus be in one place than to risk another long siege, especially when the bulk of his armies were already moving northward to surround Lucium's capital city of Lavenry.



# THE UNDERDWELL

The Underdwell is a massive series of underground caverns, home to the inhuman Aelori, the so-called magic-eaters. Human, especially Magni, are advised to avoid these creatures. While Kalthus has the most famous entry point to their subterranean lair, no one really knows if there's just one Underdwell or many. Some say there's a whole network of them just below the surface of Aveum, filled with countless Aelori thirsty for the power of the leylines above.





## —✧ MT. DRESNYR ✧—

Kalthus is home to the dreaded Mt. Dresnyr, an active war volcano who is still bound by the Oaths it made to the tribes of the Older Winds to remain neutral and at rest. Its lava lakes are said to be home to the wicked keeps of eldritch fire cults not seen since the days of the Druahmen.



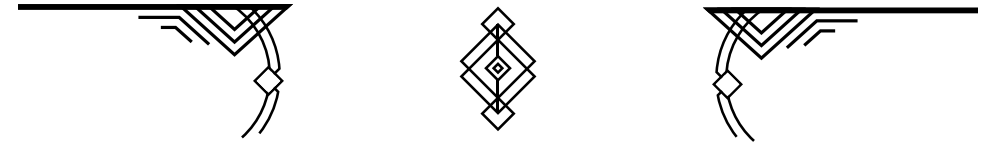
# THE QUEEN WITH FIVE FACES

Commonly seen on the shield symbols of the Aeventhi, the fierce lightless warrior-guard of the Oathsworn, are ancient Kalthusian renditions of the Pentacade in its female form. Akin to the fertility spirits of the Arjimahn, she has five bellies, each one facing a different kingdom in cardinal fashion, each one pregnant, symbolizing her as the source of all of Aveum's peoples and the provenance of their culture. Similarly, she has ten arms, reached into the air at different angles like the Dyadish holy trees.





# LUCIUM



For the last several decades, the kingdom of Lucium has been the only real challenger to Rasharn in the Everwar. Home to the mighty Order of Immortals and the Lights Army, it has outlasted the efforts of Houses Iopatl and Ariken to push further north on either side of the Wound. And yet now, with Sandrakk on the ascendant, Lucium finds its once impenetrable borders faltering.

The construction of fortresses along the relatively new Oremic Shelf have fallen behind, looking like jagged teeth along the western woundrifts. Rasharn pushes against these stalled defenses by airship raids, using hiding places among the sky-islands as staging areas. Roads east are clear but contested all the way to the Threndel Drop Offs and beyond, with Seren and the Deepmere still providing precious gateways to resupplying the Front. The Woundward South is the kingdom's best protection, though reports of Sandrakk's nascent armada are a persistent worry. It's the Northern Holdings that have surprisingly given way to Sandrakk's inexorable advances, with Lavenry besieged and Yltheum Fields and its famous Leyline Tower in constant danger.

Much of Lucium's fair countryside is gone, replaced by the stone roads, deforestation, and trench works that its ceaseless military maneuvers demand. Soothsayers proclaim the end is near for King Valentean, and for once it's not hard to believe them.

















# LAVENRY

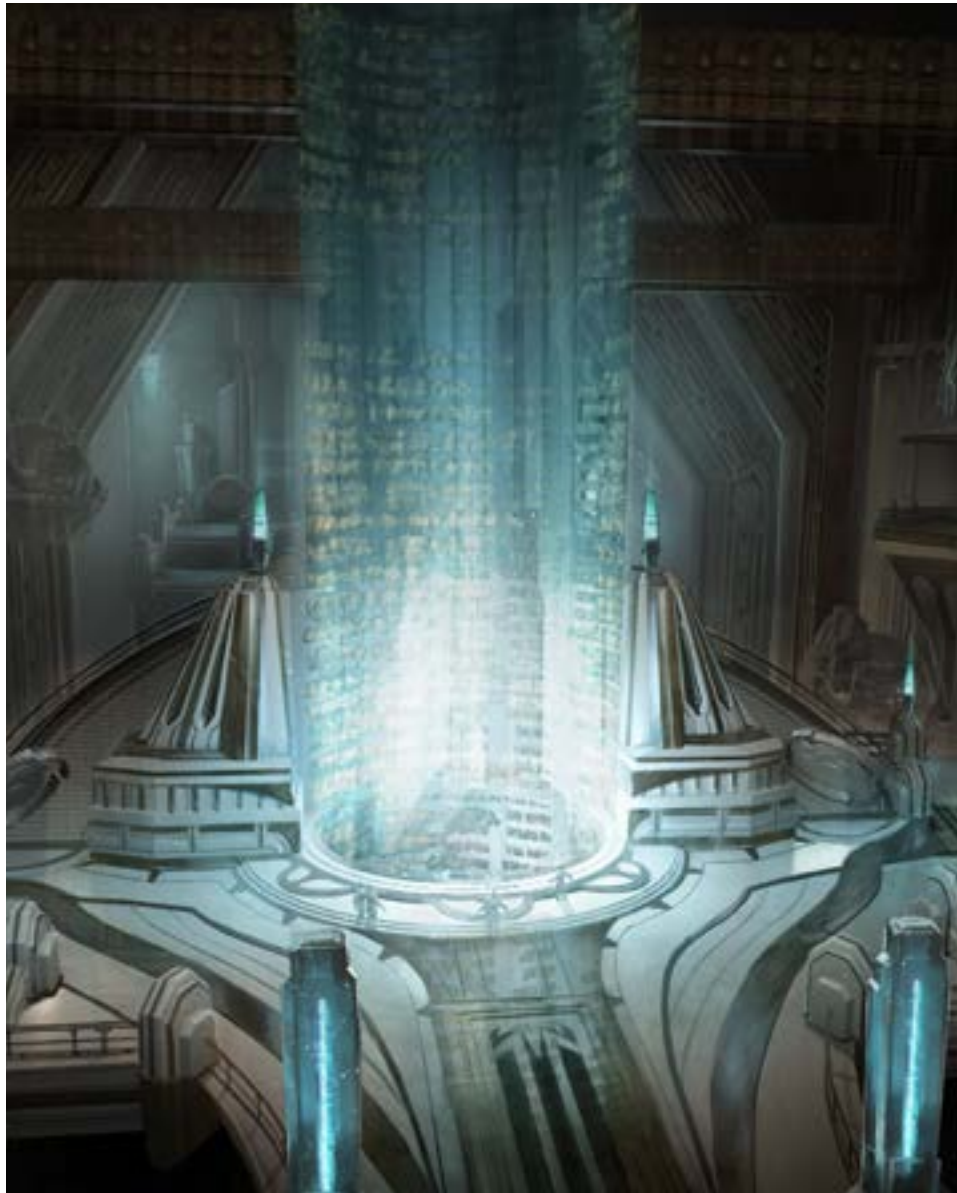
The Opal Sun of the North. Seat of the Ionician Kings. Lavenry's the capital of Lucium, besieged and cut off from the rest of the kingdom.



## THE PALATHON

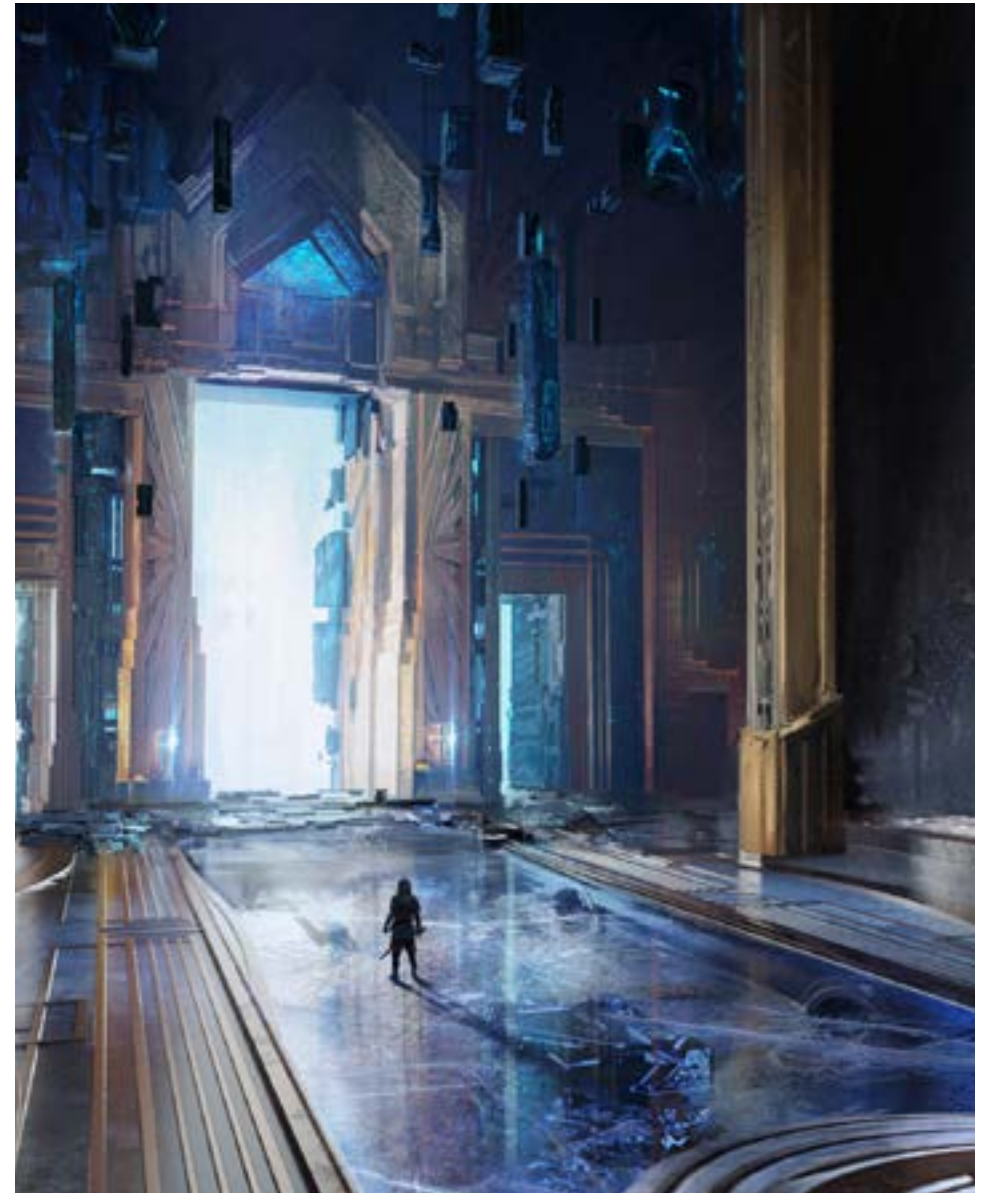
The Cloud Keep of Kor-Alabass. Druhn-Fal's Crown. The Ring Alabaster of the Oon Avlashuud. The fortress most commonly called the Palathon floats above the lowlands of southern Lucium, serving today as the headquarters of the Order of Immortals. Its history stretches back beyond even that of the earliest Arjimahn. Legends say it was built to last until the Pentacade's final days, but the identity of its original architects has never been discovered.





## —❖ HALL OF MEMORIES ❖—

At the main entrance of the Palathon is the Hall of Memories with its famous Wall of Names. Through an unknown and terribly ancient magic—some thoughtarchs date the enchantment to the mythical Aeyonic age!—this glowing slow waterfall of light records the countless casualties of the Everwar. It's both beautiful and unnerving to look upon, this scrolling, ever-updating tally of dead names, unfolding across at least fifteen thousand years by Pentadi reckoning.



## —❖ THE PATH ❖—

Deep inside the Palathon is a magical un-space called the Path, which the Order of Immortals uses to find their newest recruits. Magni that have walked it report that its shifting arcane environments are reminiscent of those found in shroud-fanes, though infused with far more power. Some have even suggested this pocket dimension is a living thing, able to pull visions and secrets from the minds of those inside it.

# SEREN

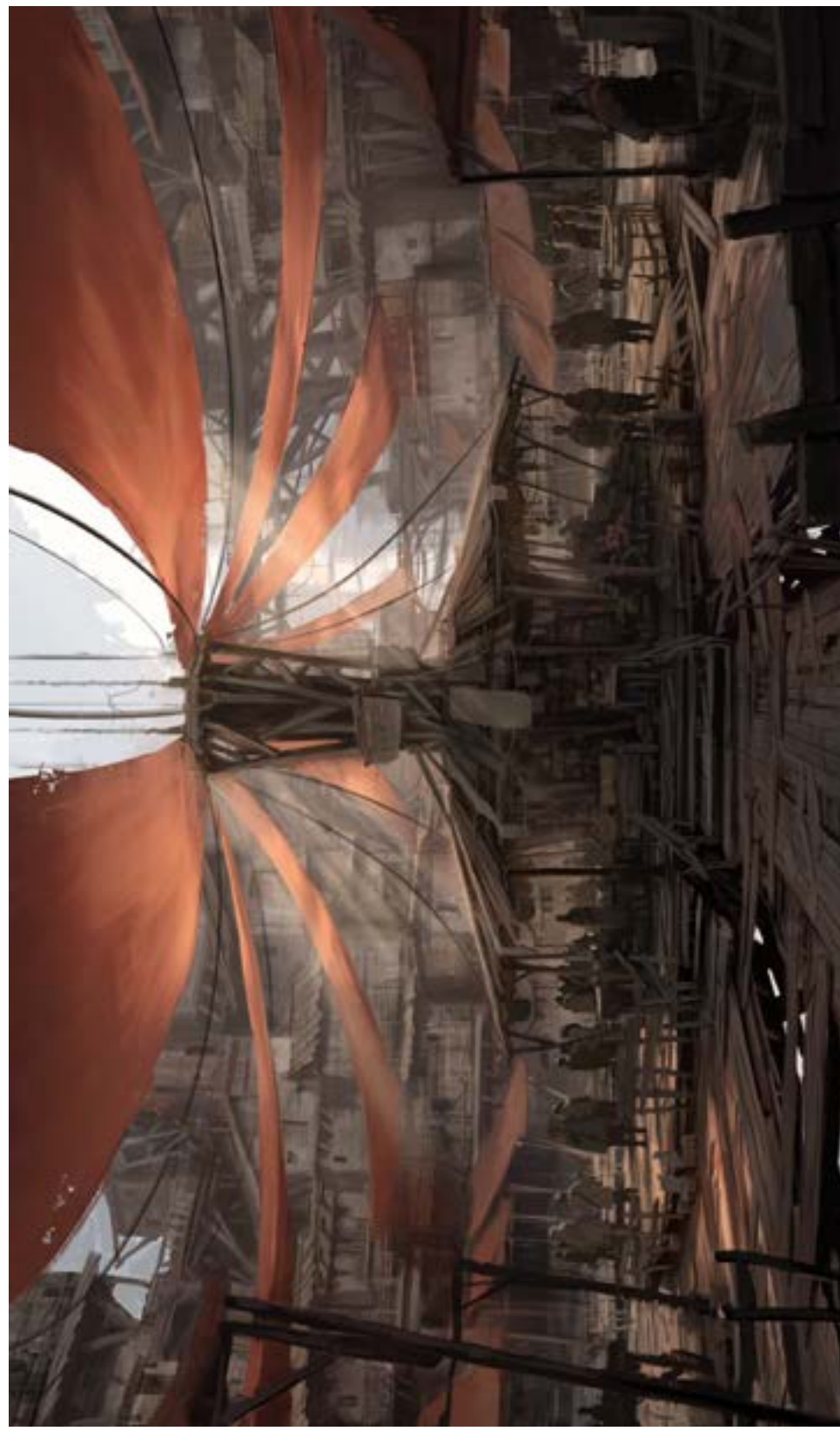
The bridge-city of Seren spans one of the easternmost chasms of the Wound, serving as a crossroads between the King Valentean's stewardships and the hinterland clans beyond. While technically a territory of Lucium since 1025 PA, the former city-state would raise an eyebrow at that assertion. Indeed, most of its citizenry are still reluctant to recognize the authority of Lavenry (and famously vocal about it) much as they were with the Guildmasters of the League of the Free East before, when they were a charter member. Scofflaws of the Underbridge have even visited violence on tourists that would dare refer to them as Lucians. So take care, dear reader.

In this fiercely independent spirit, Seren's upper and lesser classes find common ground, for the nobility of Topside knows the strategic value of the bridge-city in military logistics, and thus knows how much they can reasonably leverage their own self-governance against the Crown. Even after the Bombing of 1039, Seren refused the help of the Lights Army Engineering Corps, preferring to use their own labor unions to handle the reconstructions.













## —✧ AIRSHIP DOCKS ✧—

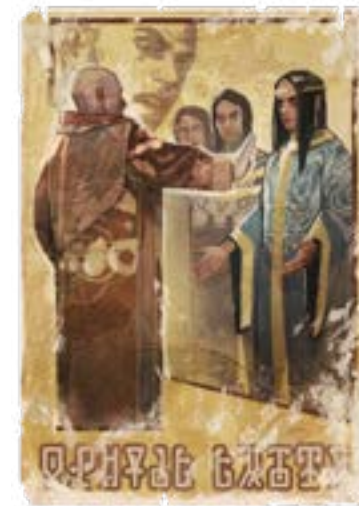
Normally reluctant to make concessions towards the Lights Army, Seren has gladly accepted the Lucian forces now garrisoned in the city's many sky-docks. Terrible memories of the Bombing of 1039 are still fresh, and Topside officials regret the lack of air defenses they were able to muster against Sandrakk's assault.



## —✧—

"Seren is home. It's a ramshackle wonder world built by the lost, the low, the lightless in the margins, hanging above the Wound with all the defiance her forebears passed on to their children. There's no finer city in Lucium than Seren, rickety in everything but faith."

—Ode to the Underbridge, Revas



While they may resist being called Lucian, the people of the Underbridge readily take to bestowing the name “Serenite” to those refugees of the Everwar that end up there, whatever their origin. Indeed, the city itself is named after the patron saint of the abandoned.

Hexbrands of the Northern Court used to monitor Seren’s Underbridge inhabitants for the signs of Shelehdic influence, for some among the Lucian Magni Houses theorized that changewinds blowing up from the chasm might serve as a constant conduit to the Shrouded Realm. When the surveillance was discovered, the hive riots of Harrow’s End forced the royal agents to withdraw.





# THESS



Thess was a sanctuary settlement in southernmost Lucium, originally founded by hundreds of Lucian-Kleylish refugees that had escaped the frontlines to live in the shadow of a ruined Aristeyan Wound Observatory. Within just a few years, and with a continual influx of more displaced families, these settlers had become relatively self-reliant. Their leaders had even gone so far as to petition Lavenry for recognition in the dynastic councils. Sandrakk's forces leveled the settlement a year before Rasharn's bombing of Seren. The attack was so brutal and so thorough that Thess remains empty to this day. Presently, it is used as a training grounds for magically-talented soldiers of the Lights Army.







## —✧ WOUND'S EDGE OBSERVATORY ✧—

A neutral coalition of arcano-engineers and extraplanar academics from around the world once used the Wound's Edge Observatory to study the nature of the hole in reality at the heart of Aveum. They abandoned the facility when the increasing brutality of the Everwar made it too dangerous to continue their work.



✧

“The Wound leads down to a void of absolute negation, a place that should not be. Even staring into it for too long can cause incurable insanity, as if vision and thought itself were being drawn past the terminus to be utterly removed from the world.”

— Haif Wiggins, Planartheologist, Helhedeem College



## PALE FOREST

Though the Leyline Tower in the Pale Forest has been inactive for a century or more, there has been a noticeable increase of Lights Army forces along the woodland paths that lead to it. Outpost patrols and scryskiff flyovers of the region have become more frequent, leaving many to wonder why.

Perhaps with Sandrakk's focus on capturing the Yltheum Tower, the Grand Magnus of the Immortals fears there may be something about its inert sister that has some heretofore unknown strategic value.









# THE LIVING SHRINES



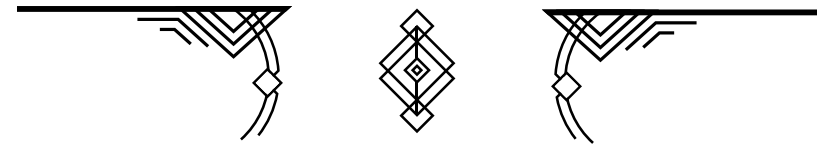
Welcoming visitors entering the Pale Forest from Crownsgate, the Braid of Galain is a giant swirling root gently encircling an elder green leyline. The Druahmen regarded it as a wedding ring, proof that Speyrus the Green Law of Magic was a favored husband of the Glen Witch of Galain.

Farther in sits the Table of Ahtahm, the favored monument of the earliest Lucian forest saints. Dynastic seers make seasonal pilgrimages to commune with it, testing the winds of the Everwar to see if they augur well for the King.





# K'LEY



The mythical K'LEY so often portrayed in Aveum's entertainments of old— its adventure novels, its picture house serials, its songs of fabled pirates— is gone. The Front has had sixty years to make sure of that. The result of the constant, shifting borders of the Lucian-Rasharnian conflict has split the kingdom into three distinct parts. They have developed cultural identities so strong that there's simply no going back.

Early on, the Sea-Kings found more profit in placating the foreign armies that sought to occupy their lands than they did by resisting them. Coffer-filling Oath-scrolls were drawn up on either end of K'LEY, some to Lucium, others to Rasharn, and all of them heavily calibrated to favor the colonial interests of both.

The northwestern stretch of the ocean kingdom is nominally Lucium now, having become wartime dependent territories ever since the Kleylish Trading Guilds allowed the Lights Navy permanent stay. Rasharn's military jurisdiction extends from the Wraithwinds of their borders all the way up to the Ehloka peninsulas. The middle seas are all that's left of the old Kleylish, held together by the Trenchship Lords. Their honor demands they oppose both encroaching powers as best they can, even as the rest of the Sea-Kings parcel out their nation as dictated by the richest envoys of the Everwar.

In a very literal sense, the Occupation of K'LEY will last forever, held in place by purchased Oaths, a magic older than mankind.







# THE COLOSSALS OF THE DEEPMERE

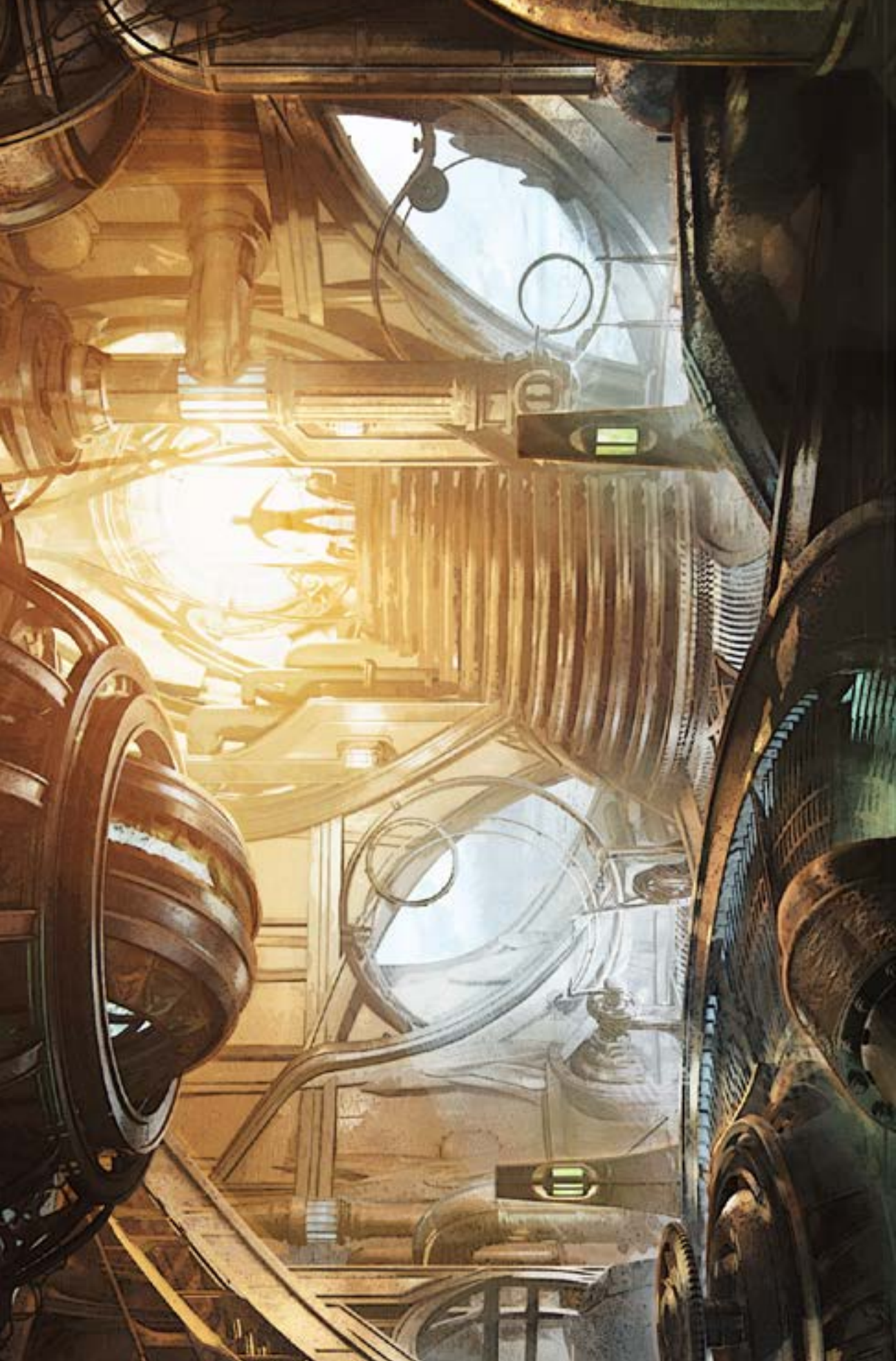
The most reliable method of charting the escalation of the Everwar is noting the willingness of certain kingdoms to alter previously agreed upon rules of engagement. The growing presence of the Kleylish Colossals in military maneuvers is one of these.

For centuries, the use of these ancient titanic war machines has been forbidden by humanitarian sanctions set forth at the Conclave of Gulhad. The Sea-Kings of K'LeY were able to skirt around those restrictions by using the Colossals as cargo and trading vessels along the Deepmere. It's a tradition begrudgingly unchallenged by both Lucium and Rasharn, whose armies rely on the machines on a logistical level.

Ever since the Trenchship Rebellion, however, Lights Navy fleet actions with Colossal escort support have increased. The doom of the Arjimahn may be marching again.

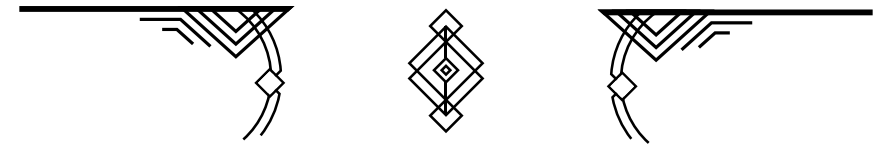








# OREMEN



No other kingdom has known more disaster and tumult in the last twenty five years of the Everwar than Oremen. One could even find a grim irony in that, for the Oremic people as a whole had been conscientious objectors to the conflict for generations. What remains of that people, what hardships and loss and grief they've experienced since the Gatterond rent their lands asunder, still cannot be truly measured. Their unasked-for transformation into a society of sky-nomads clinging to life across unnumbered floating tempest rocks is a work-from-ruin in progress.

If by some strange turn the reader is unaware of the Gatterond's history, a brief refresher: Oremen tried to create a society where magic was freely shared by the Magni and lightless commoners alike. The prime architect of this movement was Magister Akoth of House Mayadeen, a radical Magni of the Order of Sand and Remembrance. The idea of a social distribution of magic proved so popular that its tenets slowly started to spread to the other Five Kingdoms. Then Oremen literally exploded, with the greatest magical calamity in living record— the Gatterond— nearly erasing the kingdom from history altogether.

What did vanish were Akoth's dreams of an egalitarian approach to magic, and they are unlikely to ever return. Today, Oremen is just another hot zone of the war. Airship fleets of Lucium and Rasharn constantly battle each other in the clouds as their marines engage in ground skirmishes all over the sky-islands. Meanwhile, the Oremic nomads can only watch on from their hiding places, trapped by the confrontation they avoided for so long.







# LIBRARY OF AKOTH

The Library of Akoth and Institute of Cultural Equality was dedicated to its namesake's goal for a collective and equal ownership of magic. Akoth believed that by distributing magic evenly, the world would finally be able to work towards an end to the Everwar. While the Library was a repository of the history and practice of magic, the Institute had a department dedicated to the study of those souls born without magic ability but that manifested it later in life. Among the many radical beliefs of Akoth's disciples was that these "Unforeseen" held the key to bringing magic back to all the peoples of Aveum.

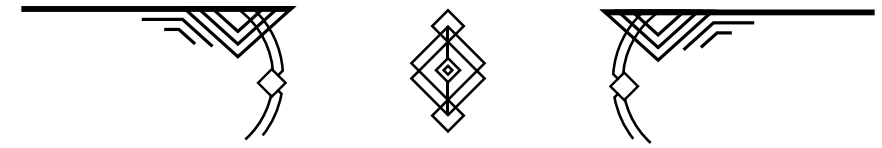




# LEGACY OF THE GATTEROND

Though unproven, many Magni of the royal dynastic houses blame Oremen's continued experiments of shared magic as being the cause of the Gatterond. A growing number of members of the Unaffiliated Orders, however, are convinced that the calamity was an act of sabotage perpetrated by one or more of the other kingdoms out of fear— that Akoth's beliefs were spreading too fast, a dangerous distraction for their populations at wartime. (The reader will note that there is never any other time, but alas.) The voices of these members have become so loud that a date for Joint Council of Nocea has been set to judge whatever evidence they have found. We hope to report their findings in next year's guide.

# RASHARN



The lands of Rasharn are the least affected by the Everwar. Rasharnian history is one of violent and continual expansionism, with no major bloodshed to be found inside the kingdom's borders. Even Lucium's greatest victory in the region— the toppling of House Ariken— was achieved from afar, with no commitment of Lights Army forces on the ground.

(Experts agree that had it not been for the Sandrakk's inexplicably rapid rise to power, the Everwar might have ended there. Or at least stalled for several years.)

While the nightblade armies of Rasharn grow increasingly more terrible in aspect, the beauty of its interior is undiminished. Its colored deserts swirling around the leyline oases and flowered caravanseries, its opaline castles and spin-worked spires dancing across the arid highlands, its prismatic coasts and perfumed rain and soaring song-winds-- one could write tortured prose forever about the enchanted wonders of Rasharn (and have, just now).

Only the poisoned Wraithwind Fields on the kingdom's Woundward border have left a lasting mark, one that Rasharn made itself to fend off their invaders. It might very well last forever, as sacrificial magic is one of the strongest arts, not easily undone.









# THE TOWER OF MASKS

Officially, Kworloorean remains the capital of Rasharn, but the stronghold of the kingdom's Magni Order is the true heart of Sandrakk's regime.

At no point in history has the Tower of Masks ever been breached by the armies of a foreign power, terrestrial or otherwise. It's largely believed to be a mirageolisk, capable of changing appearance and moving across the Rasharnian desert as need demands. In the latter respect, dear reader, think of it as a land-based Palathon.

Still other Magni writings support the theory that the kingdom is littered with the "were-towers" of Druahmen legend, able to turn into the Tower of Masks when the moons are right.







# THE LIGHTS

## ARMY



The Lights Army is Lucium's main fighting force in the Everwar. The bulk of the army is made up of battalions of lightless foot soldiers, under a core command of Magni drawn from the Northern Court or handpicked by the High Marshall. These are accompanied by vast numbers of regional conscript divisions, support personnel, and construct auxiliaries. They are presently deployed across 38 theaters, including Iopalet.

The Lights Navy comprises an unconfirmed number of line vessels, frigates, skiff carriers, and fight-capable half-junks, with a few Colossal war machines as escorts. The Lucian Air Corps is still recovering from its defeats in Oremen, with no comments on the present size and integrity of its air fleets forthcoming.

While largely comprised of soldiers born within the Lucian borders, the Lights Army has a sizable portion of allied battle formations it can bring to bear, such as the Kalth Irregulars separated from the Glaivegate, the League's Free Shields Army, and the inductees of the Seren and West Kleylish territories.

Lucium's mandatory draft age remains 16, whether Magni or lightless, for a period of no less than 12 years.









# THE ORDER OF IMMORTALS



The Enduring. The Lucian Spear. The Palathonians. Lucium's Magni Order, the Immortals, have known better days. They were once the largest high order in the Five Kingdoms, but centuries of constant fighting in the Everwar have left them much reduced. They borrow their name from an ancient Pentadi order, the Oon Avlashuud, who were believed to have conquered death. (Why that order ultimately vanished is up for debate but, like all things Pentadi, atemporal magic seems to be involved.)

The current Grand Magnus of the Order, Kirkan of House Arjitane, has collected a small, eclectic group to lead the Lights Army, the majority of which have no direct ties to the Lucian Great Houses. Despite this, King Valentean and the Northern Court have the utmost trust in Kirkan's martial prowess, strategic acumen, and exacting standards with it comes to the Order's selection of new members. Indeed, the Crown has made it known that if Lucium has any hope in surviving the Rasharnian advance, it will be through the strength and perseverance of its Immortals.







# GRAND MAGNUS KIRKAN

Grand Magnus Kirkan is a forty year veteran of the Everwar. Like many scions of House Arjitane, she achieved an impressive mastery of magic at an early age, and was inducted into the Order of Immortals before her 16th summer. Quickly becoming the youngest field commander in the Order's history, she led them from one victory to another. When her predecessor, Thaddeus of House Ark Kellon, stepped down, it was no surprise that he selected Kirkan as his replacement.

As a diarch, Kirkan can siphon two colors of magic from the leylines, blue and green. While many lightless believe that she is able to cast magic without need for a sigil like the saints of old, the truth is that hers are fused into her right arm, a battlefield injury she refuses to speak about.



## ZENDARA

Zendara of House Kaduss is Kalthusian royalty. As such, she is a member of two Magni Orders— an Oathsworn of Kalthus bound to Lucium’s Immortals by the Treaty of Lestfall. Astute (or uncommonly old) readers will note that this is a tradition that stretches back to a time when Kalthus was Lucium’s enemy in the Everwar (and the Order of Masks and the Immortals fought side by side!).



## DEVYN

Coming from a lesser affiliate family of House Valtansal, Devyn has served the Order in a variety of roles— comms officer, codebreaker, field intelligence specialist, and combat command. A graduate of Thassal University, Devyn held a chair on the editorial board of this very publication, and his witty, erudite commentaries on the Everwar (and scathing roasts of Great House luminaries) are deeply missed.





## —❖ ORPHE ❖—

Orphe is a seer, the last of the Yhl-Qal, whose people occupied a western portion of Lucium that collapsed during the Gatterond. They are a diarch of red and green disposition, serving as the Order's senior intelligence officer and divinations expert. They wear a Tally Mask, whose surface cycles through the faces of all the Yhl-Qal that were lost to the Wound, an enchantment that can only be perceived by those with third-sight.



## —❖ HAUSER ❖—

The Viscount Hauserelle, Lord of Sevenridge, pulls double duty as both Immortal and Eye of Lavenry. Word has it that Kirkan only suffers his membership in the Order due to his ties to the royal dynastic houses. Like many Magni in the Northern Court, the Viscount has been trained in the arts of the hexbrand.



## —✧ THADDEUS ✧—

Thaddeus of Ark Kellon was the previous Grand Magnus of the Immortals, appointing Kirkan as his successor before he exiled himself to parts unknown. That his tenure ended so suddenly and under such strange circumstances caused quite a scandal in the Northern Court.

Some say that Thaddeus publishes self-insert adventure stories under a variety of pseudonyms today (pulp yarns of spellslinging Magni are on the rise), while others claim that he found a way to wander the mythical Shrouded Realm and refuses to return.



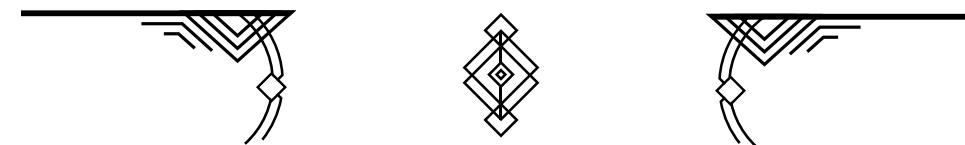
## —✧ JAK ✧—

While not yet a member of the Order of Immortals, it isn't hard for our editors to guess that Jak (no House affiliation), Kirkan's prized pupil, will become one before the end of the year. An "Unforeseen" out of Seren that survived the Bombing of 1039, Jak is also the first Triarch that Lucium has produced in two generations. Still, it may be a while before he gets to the trials of the Palathon—Jak's currently stationed at Yltheum Fields defending its Leyline Tower against Rasharn's neverending assault.





# THE RASHARNIAN ARMED FORCES



While details of the military makeup of the present Rasharnian regime are few (and suspected to be obfuscated by magics outlawed at Atherron), the general organization is the same as it's been since the Siege of Talisun 9. The core legions of Rasharn are directed by High Magni of the Order of Masks. They are heavily supplemented by nightblade shock troop divisions, those fighters most commonly seen in the conflict's outer reaches. These divisions are further bolstered by Kalthusian forces that have broken from their mother kingdom— most notably the Oathbroken Magni and their associated wind-skirmishers. Sandrakk finds himself engaged in 56 theaters at the time of this writing.

Probably the most feared of the Rasharnian Armed Forces at the Southern Front are its infamous Archon Battalions. While constructs are commonly used in battle by all of the Five Kingdoms, the restrictions of Gulhad on those “fashioned in the image and aspect of Man” have been abided by for hundreds of years. (Sandrakk's hubris in this matter extends even further, for the Archons have been given rights of property and the vote for their service to Rasharn.)

Rasharn and Lucium are considered to be evenly matched at sea. If the rumors that Sandrakk is close to deploying his so-called “airship armada” are true, the skies of Aveum will soon be his.







## —✧ THE OATHBROKEN ✧—

The Oathbroken were once High Magni of Kalthus that broke faith with their kingdom to join Sandrakk. For their treachery, they were cursed—drained of their magic and fused with the unholy spirits of the Gomjigob.

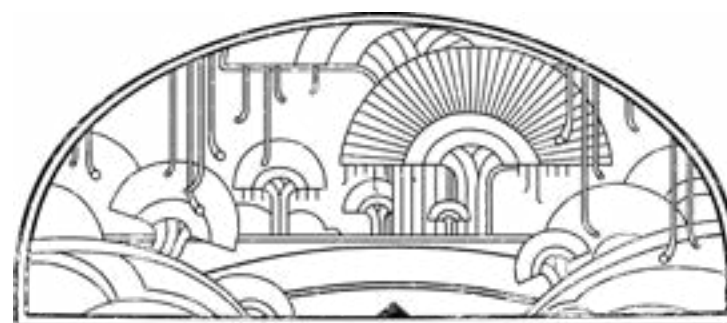
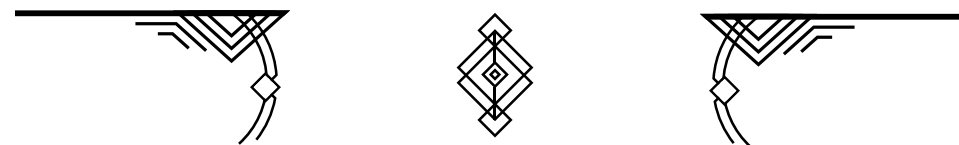








# THE ORDER OF MASKS



The Fist of Kworlolean. The Mirrored Robes. The Anointed Dinekhuzin. Unlike the Immortals, the Order of Masks does not recruit its members. Rather, any Magnus that undergoes proper tutelage in the Contemplations of the Ionicus automatically becomes part of the Order. By pledging their lifewards directly to the Grand Magnus at the end of their training, a unified spirit across the southern dynastic families is guaranteed.

This constant influx of new magic has been the Order's strength since its inception. That is has slowed quite drastically within the last few years has become Rasharn's worst kept secret. Whether this is due to poor luck in the hinters or from students abandoning their studies en masse— a growing disillusionment with the present regime has been noted— is up for conjecture.

Whatever its cause, it's become a turning point in the war. Sandrakk's aggressive incursions northward have become riskier lately, often relying on airships to hasten his forces across the Wound in dangerous maneuvers he's avoided in the past.

# SANDRAKK

The Tyrant of Rasharn. Favored Son of the Chancellor House Thairiven. The Doom of the Ariken Magni.

Sandrakk's had many names but few reliable biographers. Much of his youth is known. He was born in Woundward Rasharn in 983 PA. His parents were influential academics in the Iopatl regime in its declining years. When the Ariken Warlords took violent control of the kingdom, Sandrakk's family fled to the Lucium-occupied territories of K'Ley to avoid political prosecution. He was 16.

It took Lucium two years to grant his family a temporary asylum. They were constantly subjected to the prejudices and harassment visited on all Rasharnian refugees. Sandrakk anonymously published several underground pamphlets during this time, mostly anti-Ariken polemics with pacifist undercurrents, and often illustrated in the Rasharnian hola-shun style of the cartoonists he favored as a child. At 22, his magical talents manifested, revealing him as a Magnus, and that's when he vanished from the definitive record.

When he does reappear, Sandrakk is back in Rasharn, leading rebels and House Thairiven soldiers against the remnants of a power vacuum that Lucium itself created in 1034 PA. Scarcely ten years later, he has conquered nearly half of Aveum, and is closing in on the Lucian King in Lavenry. Much speculation is given to the missing decades of Sandrakk's life, a peculiarity so acute that its absence speaks of magical tampering, the kind that was prohibited from use at Atherron. As a Triarch, and with all the Magni of Rasharn under his command, such mirror-rituals would be within his grasp. Sandrakk is known for his fearless spirit, though. What details of his life is he hiding that he would seek such desperate measures to keep them from his enemies?





## THE HAND

The mysterious figure known as the Hand of Sandrakk is a Blue Magnus of incredible power. Serving as Sandrakk's first lieutenant, her full history is nearly as hidden as his. Her stature among the Rasharnian nobility is remarkable, as she has never claimed descent from the southern Great Houses.

She was first encountered leading a battalion of nightblade shock troops on the Kalthusian border only three years ago. Verifiable reports from the time have her spending her winter seasons at court in the Tower of Masks, mingling with the intelligentsia and attending the Contemplations of the Ionicus at war college. She met Sandrakk at the Triumph of Volghaur— an annual celebration of Rasharn's victory over the Reaver Thrall-King— where she prevented an assassination on his life by Lucian hexbrands. Grateful, the Lord Marshall appointed her as a High Magnus after fashioning her Mask himself.

Today, the Hand of Sandrakk is encountered regularly in border conflicts along the Lucian territories, earning her the fear and enmity of the Immortals and the Lights Army.



## THE MORBANE

The Morbane is Sandrakk's Butcher, often deployed in vanguard terror campaigns meant to disrupt Rasharn's enemies before a large scale assault. He is an Oathbroken from Kalthus, who has somehow retained his ability to use magic even after being subjected to the ritualized curses of his homeland's former Order.





# ENDANGERED ENTITIES

Harrowclimb International has provided us with an update to their Endangered Entities List, which no longer includes wellbeing assessments of the greater leylines. No explanation was given for the omission, but we suspect it was due to increased interference by the dynastic houses.

Below are the latest species and spirits disappearing from Aveum due to the Everwar. Where able, we have gathered images of them for the reader.

## FAUNA

Tarfs (Ridgeneck and Brownbelly)  
Plainwailer  
Painted Vurpa  
Loomfur Cackler  
Braunta (Spotted and Crowned)  
Stillwater Neb-Sleth  
Kettle-nosed King Ghauroch  
Gissyl-Slekt  
Tweb (Cave and Dust-feathered)  
Longwarren Stalker  
Stone-crested Bahroo  
Mock-antlered Sorhc  
Gabbleback  
Shendicore  
Gharcest Beast  
Salisk  
Green Destral

## FLORA

Heenya Pines  
Bomese Kep  
Whitebark Willow  
Steepsoil Vine  
Gwomrock Reef (all)  
Bhelgek Neem  
Kestikar Banyans  
Kauroch Sycamore (southern)

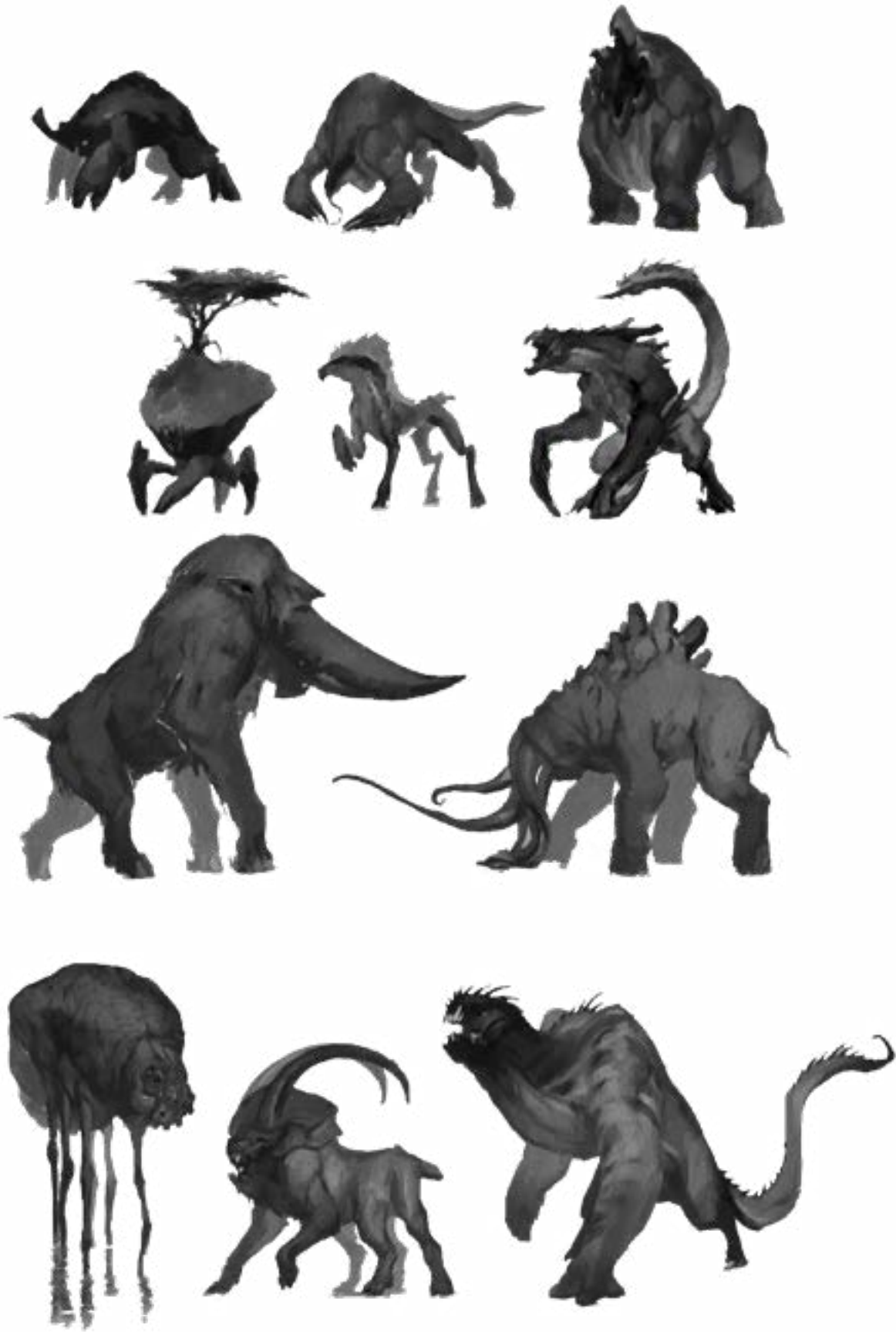
## EPHEMERA

Penitent Legion of Mother Gulg  
Eight Hearth Ghosts of Farclimb  
Garden Spirits of the Settlecup  
Smiling Walker, (97th Incarnation)  
Pelgang's Spectral Circus  
Kihleyl's Favored (Good-Natured)  
Kihleyl's Favored (Foul)









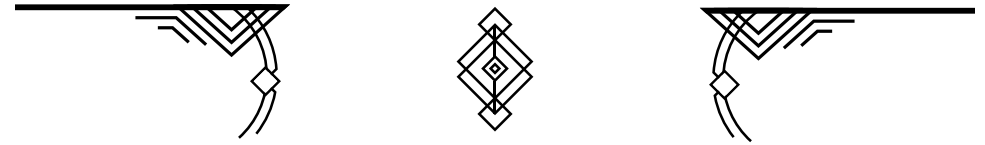








# BEASTS OF THE EVERWAR



So many creatures have died due to an eternity of magical conflict. Wondrous, beautiful, terrible, annoying, innocuous, and mundane. Some were not even native to Aveum. All have had the catastrophic misfortune to simply exist alongside us.

But the Everwar has produced a few replacements. In the main, more dangerous. More wretched. More disturbing in aspect. The Eldritch Witnesses, for example, who haunt the edges of battlefields like giant spectral kings of old. Or the guruks, those hell-bulls plucked from the Shrouded Realm to wage war in Rasharn's name. Even the common veki have become grotesque and savage things, hardly recognizable, swollen on magical fallout even as they are driven mad by it.



## —❖ HOWLERS ❖—

The mighty war beasts of Rasharn are rarely seen these days. According to the elder Magni in the Order of Masks, it's not that howlers are dying out, but rather those candidates that can potentially become them are lacking the proper conviction.

The Contemplations of the Ionicus maintain that howlers are the ancestors of the Rasharnian people. Through study, meditation, and blood ritual, a Magnus of sufficient magic can go through a “re-apotheosis into their original form.” The Tower of Masks reputedly has a chamber full of these near-ascended souls, hanging in softly glowing chrysalides, watched over by bladed automata ready to cut them free when the time is right.



## —❖ GESTALTS ❖—

Gestalts are hostile magical entities formed when a large group of Magni of a certain color meet a particularly gruesome end in close proximity. Battlefields that have suffered heavy artillery strikes are often later haunted by the gestalts of the dead.





## —❖ CONSTRUCTS ❖—

Constructs have been used as weapons in the Everwar since the beginning. One of the earliest creations of the Magni, they are also perhaps the most unnerving. The Conclave of Gulhad once convened to determine whether or not constructs, who were powered by the will of magic, possessed some aggregate form of will themselves. If they did, then should they be set free? Rasharn sued for their emancipation, but the other kingdoms were reluctant to give up their arsenals. The matter has not been revisited.



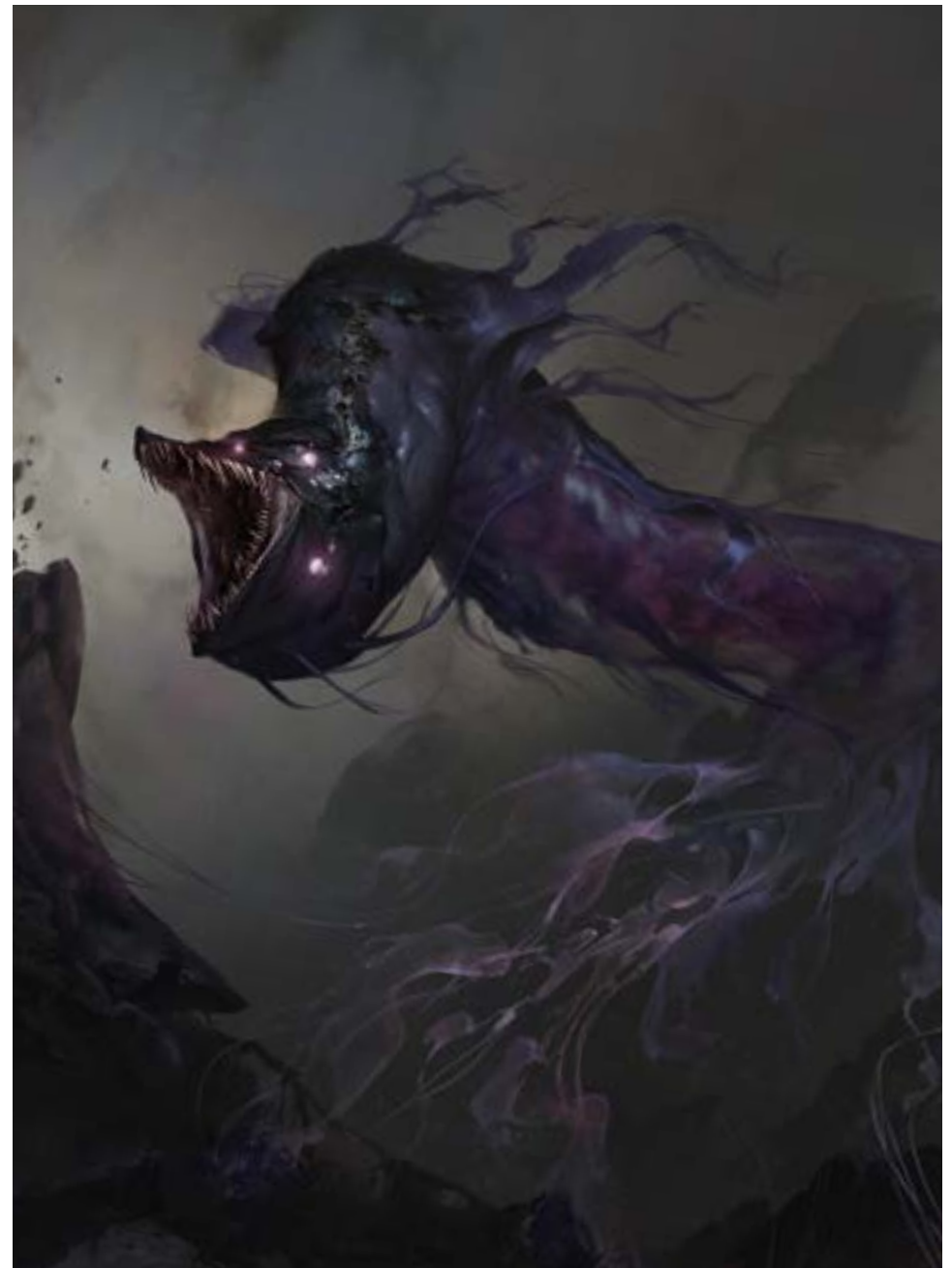
## —❖ ARCHONS ❖—

Fiercely intelligent, Archons are the deadliest constructs in existence. No one knows their creator or the original manner of their making. What is known is that they no longer use it to replenish their numbers. Instead, Archons infect other constructs to make copies of themselves. Though normally hostile, they can be reasoned with, and the more mercenary among them have secured positions within Sandrakk's armies in exchange for citizenship.



## —✧ AELORI ✧—

The demons of Aveum. The magic-eaters. In the time of legends, mankind warred mercilessly against the hated Aelori, ultimately driving them underground. It's the only time the dynastic families across the Five Kingdoms worked towards a common cause, since the Aelori's ability to drain magic threatened the existence of all Magni.



## —✧ LEYLODONS ✧—

Leylodons were once healthy leylines that have since become warped from exposure to the horrors of the Everwar. They nest in pools of corruption, hiding from the eyes of the Pentacade, only emerging when provoked.





# AFTERWORD

It's a tradition to close out this guide with the year's most radical polemic on magic from Magni practicing outside of military jurisdiction. Until we meet again, dear reader, we leave you with Phasrat's A Rebuttal to the Theory of Keys—

“The inelegant Magnus yearns to codify laws about the strands of magic— that blue is weight in flux, that red is constrained to the energies of destruction, and green finds its limits in the spectral realm of body-as-thought. Without such frameworks, we must then admit that magic is a wild thing, and afford it a freedom that we find discomfoting. If its practitioners can't wrestle their studies to the page without property of reason, how else can they speak of it with any certainty? Moreso, any authority?

“As the path becomes clearer to adepts, so does the understanding that the Ionici are not systems, but instead wills. Red Etheyrion may often express itself as destruction, but it does not govern any aspect of it, nor find itself so governed. Rather, it is simply enamored of sounds that shatter, or light that boils. It finds such things appealing.

“When red magic is focused through Sigils attuned to its hue, its effects take the shape of destruction because in those moments its wearer is a like-minded confederate. If the Magnus desires fire, then red enjoys the want. But the student should never mistake what is a tendency for an absolute, or bias for regulation.

“While the High Orders insist that Etheyrion approves all contracts between base element and Magni, one must simply look towards Kalthus in the Season of Tusk and Fishwives of 982 PA to know this is untrue. Red only expressed itself through birdsong then, an eleven year proof that no such covenant exists.”











